

CLAIMS

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A one-dish frozen dinner product comprising:

- (1) a baking apparatus having a bottom, an open top, slanted sidewalls, and an outer rim at the open top;
- (2) a detachable baking shield adapted to attach to the outer rim of the baking apparatus;
- (3) a frozen self-rising bread crust contained in the baking apparatus, wherein the bread crust has a bottom and slanted sidewalls conforming to the baking apparatus;
- (4) a frozen filling contained within the frozen self-rising bread crust;
- (5) an integral frozen self-rising bread ring resting on top of the filling and in contact with the outer rim of the bread crust; and
- (6) a shipping carton for containing the dinner product;

wherein the dinner product can be stored frozen in the shipping carton until ready to be cooked; wherein the baking shield can be attached to the baking apparatus in order to protect the bread ring from overcooking when the frozen dinner is cooked; and wherein, after cooking, portions of the bread ring can be removed and consumed as a bread product with the dinner product.

2. The dinner product of claim 1, wherein the filling contains one or more components selected from the group consisting of pasta, meat, cheese, and vegetables in a sauce and wherein the sauce covers the one or more components.

3. The dinner product of claim 1, wherein surfaces of the bread crust which contact the filling have been coated with oil to prevent the sauce from soaking into the bread crust.

4. The dinner product of claim 2, wherein surfaces of the bread crust which contact the filling have been coated with oil to prevent the sauce from soaking into the bread crust.

5. The dinner product of claim 4, wherein the baking shield includes an upstanding sidewall to engage the outer rim so as to be upstanding therefrom when in an installed position; wherein the baking shield further includes an upper wall inwardly extending from upstanding sidewall so as to form a central opening when in the installed position; and wherein the baking shield stored at the bottom of the baking apparatus.

6. The dinner product of claim 5, wherein the baking shield and the baking apparatus are made of metal foil.

7. The dinner product of claim 1, wherein the frozen self-rising bread crust is prepared from a bread crust dough comprising, in Baker's percentages, about 100 lbs flour, about 2 to about 12 percent sugar, about 0 to about 2 percent dough emulsifier, about 1 to about 7 percent leavening agent, about 1 to about 10 percent wheat gluten, about 2 to about 20 percent edible oil or solid fat, about 20 to about 400 ppm dough oxidant, about 1 to about 5 percent spices/ flavorants, and about 40 to about to about 80 percent water and wherein the frozen self-rising bread ring is prepared from a bread ring dough comprising, in Baker's percentages, about 100 lbs flour, about 2 to about 12 percent sugar, about 0 to about 2 percent dough emulsifier, about 1 to about 7 percent leavening agent, about 1 to about 10 percent wheat gluten, about 2 to about 20 percent edible oil or solid fat, about 20 to about 400 ppm dough oxidant, about 1 to about 5 percent spices/ flavorants, and about 40 to about to about 80 percent water.

8. The dinner product of claim 7, wherein the bread crust dough comprises, in Baker's percentage, about 100 lbs percent flour, about 6 to

about 10 percent sugar, about 0.25 to about 0.75 percent dough emulsifier, about 2 to about 6 percent leavening agent, about 4 to about 8 percent wheat gluten, about 6 to about 10 percent edible oil or solid fat, about 100 to about 200 ppm dough oxidant, about 1 to about 5 percent spices/flavorants, and about 50 to about to about 70 percent water; and wherein the bread ring dough comprises, in Baker's percentage, about 100 lbs percent flour, about 6 to about 10 percent sugar, about 0.25 to about 0.75 percent dough emulsifier, about 2 to about 6 percent leavening agent, about 4 to about 8 percent wheat gluten, about 6 to about 10 percent edible oil or solid fat, about 100 to about 200 ppm dough oxidant, about 1 to about 5 percent spices/flavorants, and about 50 to about to about 70 percent water.

9. A one-dish frozen dinner product comprising:

(1) a frustoconical baking apparatus having a bottom, an open top, slanted sidewalls, and an outer rim at the open top;

(2) a baking shield including an upstanding sidewall to engage the outer rim of the baking apparatus so as to be upstanding therefrom when in an installed position and an upper wall inwardly extending from the upstanding sidewall so as to form a central opening when in the installed position;

(3) a frozen self-rising bread crust contained in the baking apparatus, wherein the bread crust has a bottom and slanted sidewalls conforming to the baking apparatus;

(4) a frozen filling contained within the frozen self-rising bread crust;

(5) an integral frozen self-rising bread ring resting on top of the filling and in contact with the outer rim of the bread crust, wherein the bread ring is effectively covered by the baking shield in the installed position; and

(6) a shipping carton for containing the dinner product;

wherein the dinner product can be stored frozen in the shipping carton until ready to be cooked; and wherein, after cooking, portions of the bread

ring can be removed and consumed as a bread product with the dinner product.

10. The dinner product of claim 9, wherein the filling contains one or more components selected from the group consisting of pasta, meat, cheese, and vegetables in a sauce and wherein the sauce covers the one or more components.

11. The dinner product of claim 9, wherein surfaces of the bread crust which contact the filling have been coated with oil to prevent the sauce from soaking into the bread crust.

12. The dinner product of claim 10, wherein surfaces of the bread crust which contact the filling have been coated with oil to prevent the sauce from soaking into the bread crust.

13. The dinner product of claim 12, wherein the baking shield stored at the bottom of the baking apparatus.

14. The dinner product of claim 13, wherein the baking shield and the baking apparatus are made of metal foil.

15. The dinner product of claim 9, wherein the frozen self-rising bread crust is prepared from a bread crust dough comprising, in Baker's percentages, about 100 lbs flour, about 2 to about 12 percent sugar, about 0 to about 2 percent dough emulsifier, about 1 to about 7 percent leavening agent, about 1 to about 10 percent wheat gluten, about 2 to about 20 percent edible oil or solid fat, about 20 to about 400 ppm dough oxidant, about 1 to about 5 percent spices/flavorants, and about 40 to about 80 percent water and wherein the frozen self-rising bread ring is prepared from a bread ring dough comprising, in Baker's percentages, about 100 lbs flour, about 2 to

about 12 percent sugar, about 0 to about 2 percent dough emulsifier, about 1 to about 7 percent leavening agent, about 1 to about 10 percent wheat gluten, about 2 to about 20 percent edible oil or solid fat, about 20 to about 400 ppm dough oxidant, about 1 to about 5 percent spices/flavorants, and about 40 to about to about 80 percent water.

16. The dinner product of claim 15, wherein the bread crust dough comprises, in Baker's percentage, about 100 lbs percent flour, about 6 to about 10 percent sugar, about 0.25 to about 0.75 percent dough emulsifier, about 2 to about 6 percent leavening agent, about 4 to about 8 percent wheat gluten, about 6 to about 10 percent edible oil or solid fat, about 100 to about 200 ppm dough oxidant, about 1 to about 5 percent spices/flavorants, and about 50 to about to about 70 percent water; and wherein the bread ring dough comprises, in Baker's percentage, about 100 lbs percent flour, about 6 to about 10 percent sugar, about 0.25 to about 0.75 percent dough emulsifier, about 2 to about 6 percent leavening agent, about 4 to about 8 percent wheat gluten, about 6 to about 10 percent edible oil or solid fat, about 100 to about 200 ppm dough oxidant, about 1 to about 5 percent spices/flavorants, and about 50 to about to about 70 percent water.

17. A method for preparing a one-dish frozen dinner product, said method comprising:

(A) preparing a frozen bread crust by:

(1) providing a self-rising crust dough;

(2) placing the self-rising crust dough in a baking apparatus, wherein the baking apparatus has a bottom, an open top, slanted sidewalls, and an outer rim at the open top;

(3) pressing the self-rising crust dough in the baking apparatus in a first-stage pressing operation to prepare a partially formed bread crust, wherein the partially formed bread crust is about 8 to about 12 mm thick and

extends approximately half way up the slanted sidewalls of the baking apparatus;

(4) proofing the partially formed bread crust in the baking apparatus at about 80 to about 130°F and a relative humidity of about 40 to about 100 percent for about 20 to about 75 minutes;

(5) pressing the proofed partially formed bread crust in the baking apparatus in a second-stage pressing operation to prepare a bread crust, where in the bread crust is about 4 to about 8 mm thick and extends up the slanted sidewalls to the outer rim of the baking apparatus, wherein the bread crust conforms to the baking apparatus and has an interior for accepting a filling;

(6) freezing the bread crust; and

(7) applying oil to the interior of the bread crust either before or after freezing;

(B) preparing a frozen bread ring by:

(1) providing a self-rising bread ring dough;

(2) forming the self-rising bread ring dough into a bread ring having an outer dimension to approximate the outer rim of the baking apparatus;

(3) proofing the bread ring at about 80 to about 130°F and a relative humidity of about 40 to about 100 percent for about 20 to about 75 minutes; and

(5) freezing the proofed bread ring;

(C) adding a filling to the frozen bread crust so as to essentially fill the interior of the frozen bread crust, wherein the filling contains one or more components selected from the group consisting of pasta, meat, cheese, and vegetables in a sauce and wherein the sauce covers the one or more components;

(D) applying the frozen bread ring to the filled frozen bread crust such that the frozen bread ring rests on top of the filling and is in contact with the outer rim of the frozen bread crust to form a combined product;

(E) freezing the combined product to produce the one-dish frozen dinner product; and

(F) packaging the one-dish frozen dinner product in a shipping carton; wherein the one-dish frozen dinner product can be stored frozen in the shipping carton until ready to be cooked; and wherein, after cooking, portions of the bread ring can be removed and consumed as a bread product with the dinner product.

18. The method of claim 17, wherein the shipping carton also contains a detachable baking shield adapted to be attached to the baking apparatus and to prevent the bread ring from overcooking when the one-dish frozen dinner product is prepared for consumption.

19. The method of claim 18, wherein the baking apparatus is a frustoconical baking apparatus and the baking shield includes an upstanding sidewall to engage the outer rim of the baking apparatus so as to be upstanding therefrom when in an installed position and an upper wall inwardly extending from the upstanding sidewall so as to form a central opening when in the installed position.

20. The method of claim 19, wherein the baking shield and the baking apparatus are made of metal foil.

21. The method of claim 17, wherein the bread ring has a design applied before it is frozen.

22. The method of claim 19, wherein the bread ring has a design applied before it is frozen.

23. The method of claim 17, wherein the partially formed bread crust is proofed at a temperature of about 100 to about 110°F and a relative

humidity of about 80 to about 90 percent for about 30 to about 55 minutes and wherein the bread ring is proofed at a temperature of about 100 to about 110°F and a relative humidity of about 80 to about 90 percent for about 30 to about 55 minutes.

24. The method of claim 17, wherein the frozen self-rising bread crust is prepared from a bread crust dough comprising, in Baker's percentages, about 100 lbs flour, about 2 to about 12 percent sugar, about 0 to about 2 percent dough emulsifier, about 1 to about 7 percent leavening agent, about 1 to about 10 percent wheat gluten, about 2 to about 20 percent edible oil or solid fat, about 20 to about 400 ppm dough oxidant, about 1 to about 5 percent spices/flavorants, and about 40 to about to about 80 percent water and wherein the frozen self-rising bread ring is prepared from a bread ring dough comprising, in Baker's percentages, about 100 lbs flour, about 2 to about 12 percent sugar, about 0 to about 2 percent dough emulsifier, about 1 to about 7 percent leavening agent, about 1 to about 10 percent wheat gluten, about 2 to about 20 percent edible oil or solid fat, about 20 to about 400 ppm dough oxidant, about 1 to about 5 percent spices/flavorants, and about 40 to about to about 80 percent water.

25. The method of claim 23, wherein the frozen self-rising bread crust is prepared from a bread crust dough comprising, in Baker's percentages, about 100 lbs flour, about 2 to about 12 percent sugar, about 0 to about 2 percent dough emulsifier, about 1 to about 7 percent leavening agent, about 1 to about 10 percent wheat gluten, about 2 to about 20 percent edible oil or solid fat, about 20 to about 400 ppm dough oxidant, about 1 to about 5 percent spices/flavorants, and about 40 to about to about 80 percent water and wherein the frozen self-rising bread ring is prepared from a bread ring dough comprising, in Baker's percentages, about 100 lbs flour, about 2 to about 12 percent sugar, about 0 to about 2 percent dough emulsifier, about 1 to about 7 percent leavening agent, about 1 to about 10 percent wheat gluten,

about 2 to about 20 percent edible oil or solid fat, about 20 to about 400 ppm dough oxidant, about 1 to about 5 percent spices/flavorants, and about 40 to about to about 80 percent water.

26. The method of claim 24, wherein the bread crust dough comprises, in Baker's percentage, about 100 lbs percent flour, about 6 to about 10 percent sugar, about 0.25 to about 0.75 percent dough emulsifier, about 2 to about 6 percent leavening agent, about 4 to about 8 percent wheat gluten, about 6 to about 10 percent edible oil or solid fat, about 100 to about 200 ppm dough oxidant, about 1 to about 5 percent spices/flavorants, and about 50 to about to about 70 percent water; and wherein the bread ring dough comprises, in Baker's percentage, about 100 lbs percent flour, about 6 to about 10 percent sugar, about 0.25 to about 0.75 percent dough emulsifier, about 2 to about 6 percent leavening agent, about 4 to about 8 percent wheat gluten, about 6 to about 10 percent edible oil or solid fat, about 100 to about 200 ppm dough oxidant, about 1 to about 5 percent spices/flavorants, and about 50 to about to about 70 percent water.

27. The method of claim 25, wherein the bread crust dough comprises, in Baker's percentage, about 100 lbs percent flour, about 6 to about 10 percent sugar, about 0.25 to about 0.75 percent dough emulsifier, about 2 to about 6 percent leavening agent, about 4 to about 8 percent wheat gluten, about 6 to about 10 percent edible oil or solid fat, about 100 to about 200 ppm dough oxidant, about 1 to about 5 percent spices/flavorants, and about 50 to about to about 70 percent water; and wherein the bread ring dough comprises, in Baker's percentage, about 100 lbs percent flour, about 6 to about 10 percent sugar, about 0.25 to about 0.75 percent dough emulsifier, about 2 to about 6 percent leavening agent, about 4 to about 8 percent wheat gluten, about 6 to about 10 percent edible oil or solid fat, about 100 to about 200 ppm dough oxidant, about 1 to about 5 percent spices/flavorants, and about 50 to about to about 70 percent water.